CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 20 June 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Miss Tessa A.H. Solesby (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 596th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Before we proceed with our business for today, I have pleasure in informing the Conference that at the informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 3, scheduled to be held immediately after this plenary meeting, the representatives of the nuclear and space talks, Ambassador Lintton Brooks of the United States and Ambassador Yuri Nazarkin of the Soviet Union, will brief members on their ongoing negotiations. I am sure that we will all welcome this opportunity to become acquainted with the present position of their talks on such vital matters.

As members are aware, consultations have successfully been concluded on a draft decision relating to the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Therefore, once the list of speakers is exhausted, I intend to put before the Conference for adoption the draft decision contained in document CD/WP.407.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Morocco, Myanmar, Mongolia and Argentina. I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco, Ambassador Benhima.

Mr. BENHIMA (Morocco) (translated from French): First of all, Madam President, I should like to congratulate you on the skill and competence with which you have guided our work, confirming the distinguished qualities we have long known you to possess. I should also like to congratulate your predecessor in the Chair, Ambassador Batsanov.

At a time when initiatives from various sources have reminded us of the twofold necessity of disarmament and arms control, we cannot fail to note that after more than a decade the Conference has scant accomplishments to its credit, except for the progress achieved thus far in the elaboration of the convention on chemical weapons. We cannot contest the energy devoted by the Conference to implementing its mandate; but the meagre results neither reflect the efforts that have been made nor confirm the felicitous development of international relations that has marked the end of the cold war. The Conference thus faces a veritable challenge. That challenge must be met inter alia by adopting a global approach to the agenda and granting more sustained attention to priorities. Nuclear issues are among those priorities. An in-depth review of these still comes up against irreconcilable differences stemming from the order of priorities in which nuclear disarmament should be explored. Is deadlock a better solution than the resolute political commitment necessary to meet a challenge of this magnitude?

The scope of the INF Treaty cannot of course be underestimated, even though it affects only a modest part of current nuclear arsenals. Naturally we must welcome its implementation on schedule. But we remain seriously concerned about the use of the dismantled warheads. We feel that only the destruction of those warheads would give this Treaty its true historical scope and make it the first nuclear disarmament agreement capable of fostering new hopes in this field.

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The international community has followed the START negotiations with great interest and has appreciated the substantial progress that has been achieved there. We hope that the technical difficulties that have recently appeared will soon be overcome, to allow the conclusion of an agreement on major cuts in strategic nuclear weapons. We should like to hope that this agreement will mark a decisive advance towards reduction of their potential by all the nuclear Powers. By virtue of its mandate, the Conference should be brought into this process to create propicious conditions for elaborating an agreement on cessation of the arms race for this type of weapon. It should set up the necessary machinery without delay to stimulate efforts and initiatives in this field. The manner in which we are currently discussing these issues calls for a new approach given the scope of the task that still remains to be achieved.

A few weeks ago we welcomed the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. This Committee, which, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Chadha, has focused on the structure and scope of a possible prohibition of nuclear tests, as well as the related verification methods, has prompted great hopes since such a ban is undoubtedly the cornerstone of any effort aimed at nuclear disarmament. That is all the more obvious in that their continuation - aside from the fact that it has reduced confidence and generated new environmental problems - forms part of the escalation in the refinement of armaments and thus nullifies the efforts made in the field of vertical nuclear arms reduction. Hence, there is an urgent need to come to grips with this problem by embarking on genuine negotiations aimed at prohibiting such tests. Otherwise it would be futile to aspire to putting an end to the proliferation of nuclear armaments. I should like in this connection to convey my delegation's congratulations to the French delegation following the announcement of France's intention to accede to the NPT.

The Conference is energetically renewing its efforts to find political common ground which will result in a convention on chemical weapons within a reasonable time-frame. At the present stage, sustained commitment would go a long way towards overcoming outstanding problems. The decision of the United States to forswear all recourse to chemical weapons in any circumstances, including reprisals, as well as the decision to destroy all stock-piles and all production facilities completely within 10 years after the convention enters into force, will doubtless - this is our hope - have a positive impact on the ongoing negotiations.

Ever since the idea was suggested, the convening of a conference at ministerial level has continued to arouse interest, even if views are divided as to the role that should be entrusted to it and the scope of its decisions at this phase of the negotiations. We support the proposal but consider that, in view of what is at stake, such a conference should be carefully prepared for so as to ensure the best possible conditions for success, notably through the reduction of the remaining differences on major issues or fundamental principles governing the rights and duties of all parties.

The system of verification stemming from the provisions of the convention should be based on mutual trust. We are of the view that verification is

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necessary and indispensable given the relative ease with which such weapons spread. However, this should not lead us to create an over-intrusive system that will prove to be a disincentive by being too demanding. Verification should be based on scrupulous and efficient measures, but without turning into a sort of unbridled intrusion in the inspected area, or simply involving prohibitive costs which would impair the ability of the ad hoc body to carry out its mandate satisfactorily. In this connection, the institution entrusted with monitoring the application of the convention should be fully representative of that universality we seek so that it can perform its task with all due impartiality. The developing countries should have an assurance that they will benefit from chemical technologies that are destined for civilian use.

Before concluding this chapter, I should like to commend the intensive work undertaken by the Committee on Chemical Weapons during the previous session under the active and skilled leadership of Ambassador Hyltenius, whom we thank for the efforts made in the elaboration of the convention. Ambassador Batsanov, who is pursuing that task with devotion and intelligence, also deserves our tribute.

The prevention of the arms race in outer space is among the most crucial issues on which the Conference's effectiveness will one day be determined. The subject has become more and more important in view of the rapid development of space exploration technology and especially the increasingly obvious desire to use space for military purposes. In the face of this threat, we must do our utmost to safeguard this common heritage of mankind from the slightest risk of militarization. It is clear that space studies must be encouraged and programmes for the peaceful use of outer space supported. The legal void surrounding the use of space must be filled as rapidly as possible.

For a number of years we have been involved in discussions to create propicious conditions for improving the functioning and effectiveness of the Conference and for finding appropriate solutions to the existing deadlocks. In this context we must devote ourselves to a better definition of the concept of consensus by delineating all its contours. The rule of consensus guarantees that the various schools of thought within the Conference will be taken into consideration, but it should also involve a painstaking search for compromise on issues on the agenda and avoid being transformed into a pretext for blocking any possibility of progress in our work. We believe that the flexible application of the consensus rule can produce positive results. In this connection allow me to congratulate Ambassador Kamal, who is leading our consultations on this issue with great skill.

The world has recently become acutely aware of the dangers of the build-up of weapons of mass destruction; the magnitude of these dangers in the Middle East has been particularly underscored in this forum. The American proposals on arms control in the Near and Middle East (29 May 1991) and the arms control and disarmament plan presented by France (3 June 1991) are valuable contributions to an in-depth review of the best way to implement the various aspects of these two initiatives. The major Powers, and particularly

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the United States and the Soviet Union, now agree that global security can be achieved through the strengthening of the role of the United Nations. Recently President Bush, in a statement on 6 March 1991, spoke of "a world where the United Nations, free from the cold-war stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders". Let us then see to it that the Conference, which is the sole multilateral negotiating organ in the field of disarmament, becomes truly both the framework for the settlement of difficult issues and issues of global interest and also the instrument that can properly serve the cause of peace through disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Morocco for his statement and also for his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar, Ambassador Hlaing.

Mr. HLAING (Myanmar): Madam President, as I am taking the floor for the first time during this session, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and for the excellent leadership you have provided in presiding over the work of the session. The fact that our work has proceeded so efficiently and smoothly amply demonstrates the diplomatic skill and experience with which you have conducted the meetings. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Batsanov of the Soviet delegation for the most competent manner in which he guided the work of the Conference during the preceding months, from 18 March to 26 May, including the recess between the first and the second part of the annual session.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks for the warm words of welcome addressed to me by my senior colleagues and to reciprocate their kind sentiments with equal pleasure. I look forward to working in close cooperation with all members of the Conference. I wish also to bid farewell to Ambassador Dr. Nabil Elaraby of Egypt, who has been given an important assignment as Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations in New York. My delegation conveys its best wishes to him for further success in his new assignment.

We are holding this session at a time of important and far-reaching positive developments in the international political scene. The end of the cold war has relegated to the background East-West rivalry and has provided a unique opportunity to work out a coherent strategy of peace and security based on dialogue and cooperation. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), and the new set of confidence-building and security-building measures adopted within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, are developments which will have a lasting impact on international peace and security. The positive results so far achieved in the bilateral context of negotiations between the two super-Powers have given us hope that much more can be achieved in the field of disarmament. After the crucial breakthrough of the INF Treaty, prospects of significant reductions in strategic nuclear weapons are now within sight. We should, however, not remain complacent. The achievements in the bilateral context in the field of nuclear arms control should be shifted into the multilateral forum. We hope

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that the momentum generated by recent positive developments in the world will enable the Conference on Disarmanent, as the single multilateral negotiating body, to produce genuine and viable agreements.

The current session of the CD has been marked by important events such as the United States initiative on chemical weapons. The announcement by President Bush last month that the United States will drop its right of retaliation and destroy all its chemical weapon stocks within 10 years of the convention coming into force constitutes a breakthrough in the negotiations. We hope that this initiative will lead to positive developments. Another notable feature of this session is the increasing participation of non-member States. This trend is indicative of the growing awareness of and interest in the substantive work being done at the Conference.

The greatest danger facing mankind today is the threat of nuclear war. The existence of nuclear weapons and their quantitative and qualitative development jeopardize the vital security interests of all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear. It has come to be generally recognized that a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought. The shortest way to remove the danger of a nuclear war is to eliminate all nuclear weapons, and pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited. The use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to the laws of humanity and would constitute a crime against civilization. It is, therefore, a matter of extreme urgency to achieve nuclear disarmament through complete elimination of all nuclear weapons.

A comprehensive nuclear test ban would be the single most effective measure to bring the nuclear arms race to a halt. A comprehensive test ban would not only promote quantitative reductions but also hamper qualitative improvements of nuclear weapons. Although the amendment conference of the partial test-ban Treaty which was held in New York in January 1991 ended without being able to reach a consensus on the draft declaration, it could not be construed as a failure. Despite the differences in approach to the whole issue, there is overwhelming support on the part of the member States for a significant role played by the Conference on Disarmament in dealing with various aspects of a nuclear test ban.

If we study the agenda of the CD, we will find that the nuclear issues are placed at the top of the agenda, which signifies their importance. The fact that the Conference was able to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on agenda item 1, Nuclear test ban, at an early date despite strong views held by some delegations concerning the terms of reference of the Committee, testifies to the importance attached to the question. In this connection, the delegation of Myanmar would like to express its deep appreciation to Ambassador Donowaki of Japan for the very valuable contribution made by him during the formative stages of the work of the Committee during last year and during the inter-sessional period. We are also confident that Ambassador Chadha of India can further improve on the good work done by Ambassador Donowaki.

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On agenda item 2, Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, and agenda item 3, Prevention of nuclear war and all related matters, although the Conference has not been able to set up the respective ad hoc committees, a step in the right direction has been made by addressing these subjects in the informal plenary meetings.

The threat of the use of chemical weapons was heightened during the recent Gulf war. The war has once again reminded us of the need for urgent conclusion of a convention completely and totally banning chemical weapons. The Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons two years ago stressed the necessity of concluding at an early date a convention on chemical weapons and called on the Conference on Disarmanent to redouble its efforts as a matter of urgency to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date. It is, therefore, most encouraging to note that considerable progress has been made on various issues which are now reflected in the new "rolling text", though a few key issues still remain to be resolved.

For the effective implementation of the chemical weapons convention universal adherence is of the utmost importance. I fully agree with Ambassador Hyltenius, when in introducing the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons (CD/1046), he stated that the convention must be effective and non-discriminatory in order to be sufficiently attractive and that it must be unattractive to stay outside. It is gratifying to note that increasing numbers of non-members of the Conference on Disarmament are now participating in the negotiations, which augurs well for the prospects of universal adherence to the convention. Regarding the verification system, while substantial progress has been made, important issues still remain.

The future convention must provide for the legitimate concerns of the security of non-possessor States. It is also essential to provide genuine and credible guarantees to States which do not produce or store chemical weapons in a way that will enhance rather than diminish their security. The security of all countries can be best strengthened through the early conclusion and entry into force of the convention. Bringing about an effective, verifiable and truly global convention banning chemical weapons at the earliest date is a political priority.

The Union of Myanmar, which is unequivocally committed to the achievement of the total and comprehensive banning of chemical weapons, possesses no such weapons, nor has the means of producing them, nor the intention of acquiring them. Our country's stand in international forums has always been that of the total banning of all kinds of chemical weapons without exception. We have consistently voted for resolutions which would help ban forever chemical weapons.

I should be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Hyltenius for the valuable contribution he has made through untiring efforts. We are also convinced that under the experienced stewardship of Ambassador Batsanov, further progress can be

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achieved. The Ad Hoc Committee has got off to a good start this year. The recent decision to hold an additional regular session of limited duration during the period 8 to 19 July 1991 would enable the Committee to further intensify its efforts to resolve the remaining issues.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has been re-established this year with the same mandate as in the past. However, we find it regrettable that it was not possible to improve the mandate of the previous years. Our delegation looks with keen interest upon the initiative of Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina which has enabled the Committee to dwell on the subject in a more practical way.

The early agreement reached to re-establish the ad hoc committees on radiological weapons and negative security assurances gave us a good start to prepare ourselves for constructive work on these items. The early commencement of the work gives us hope that some concrete results can be achieved before the conclusion of the 1991 session.

Concerning item 8, the delegation of Myanmar attaches great importance to the conclusion of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. As consensus has eluded us on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee, the Conference has in the meanwhile appointed Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico as special coordinator responsible for reaching consensus on an appropriate organizational arrangement for that agenda item. Although we place full confidence in the ability of Ambassador Bosch, we hope that the Ad Hoc Committee on item 8 can be re-established as indicated in the General Assembly resolution 45/62 E.

The Conference has been keeping under review the question of improved and effective functioning of the CD every year. This year we are pleased to see the resumption of the informal open-ended consultations under the chairmanship of Ambassador Kamal. On 19 March, Ambassador Kamal made a proposal containing topics for consideration, such as expansion of the CD; the question of groupings; the question of the validity of the agenda; the concept of consensus; the review of the CD's administrative procedures. Many interesting ideas and observations have been put forward at the discussions. Although it may not be easy to find a quick solution to the subject under review, considering the complex nature of the issues, my delegation is confident that under the able guidance of Ambassador Kamal considerable progress can be made.

Madam President, today is the last day of the plenary session under your presidency. The delegation of Myanmar would once again like to thank you for a job well done, especially during this crucial phase of the session. We are confident that the next President, Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States of America, will not only carry onward the good work you have done but also consolidate further the results already achieved.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Myanmar for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Mongolia, Ambassador Baljinnyam.

Ms. BALJINNYAM (Mongolia): Madam President, it is indeed an honour and privilege for me to take the floor under your skilful leadership. You are not only one of a few women ambassadors to serve the CD, but also one of those few who has the honour to preside over its proceedings. I am sure that through your commitment and dedication to the cause of disarmament you will also be one of those few to be remembered as the most outstanding lady ambassadors in the world of disarmament. A world dominated by men.

The dawn of the post-cold-war era offers both uncertainty and daunting possibility. The sweeping positive political changes in international relations at times bring forward acute internal problems laden with far-reaching implications. Unresolved problems piled during the past, cry for solutions in the new context in a manner consistent with the spirit of our time. The horizon of world peace that looked so bright and promising last year was darkened by the clouds of war in the Persian Gulf. A lesson to learn from this war is an obvious one. That is the accumulation of weapons of modern conventional types, not speaking of weapons of mass destruction, is fraught with the danger of destabilization and war. The Gulf crisis highlighted the urgent need to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Problems connected with arms transfer and the destruction of chemical and bacteriological weapons have been put higher on the international political agenda. A number of important initiatives to limit the arms race in the Middle East have been put forward. In this context the relevance and importance of the Conference on Disarmament has become more prominent than ever. Finally, East-West rivalry is being replaced by cooperation. The conclusion of the CFE Treaty heralds the beginning of a new era of inter-State relations in Europe. The example of Europe in reducing tensions and increasing stability is an extremely valuable lesson to other regions and provides important ideas of enhancing a regional approach to disarmament and arms control. My delegation fully shares the view that regional arms control measures constitute central elements of international stability.

During the last couple of years we have been living under the expectations of completing the drafting of a universal, comprehensive and effectively verifiable convention on the total prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. A task which proved to be rather elusive to achieve. However, in the light of the latest developments, in particular the timely initiative of the United States, a breakthrough in the negotiations has become a reality.

My delegation welcomes the United States initiatives, its readiness to forswear the use of chemical weapons and its commitment to destroy its chemical weapon stocks. The new constructive United States stand opens the way to solve two of the most central issues of the future convention. Mongolia fully supports the call made by President Bush to resolve major outstanding issues by the end of 1991 and complete the convention within the next 12 months. We are in favour of intensifying the negotiations and support the proposal for a package solution taking into account the interests of States participating in the negotiations, initiated by the Chairman of the

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Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Serguei Batsanov. We see the advantage of this approach in the fact that it provides the opportunity to examine the important problems connected with security, verification and organization in their close interrelationship.

There are a number of complex issues the settlement of which will require not only technical solutions but political decisions. I have in mind the questions of verification, decision-making and financial obligations of States parties, as well as economic cooperation and development. My delegation fully shares the view that the negotiations on banning chemical weapons are at a critical stage, and in need of strong political support from every quarter. At the same time we consider that with the necessary flexibility and willingness of all parties to compromise, progress towards finalization of the convention should be within reach. In this context Mongolia supports the convening of a well-prepared ministerial meeting, which would not only give a strong impetus to the negotiations but solve the last remaining issues. For the sake of the universality of the future convention on chemical weapons such a meeting could be open for participation to all interested States.

My delegation sees in the successful conclusion of the consultations on the new mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons the reaffirmation of the commitment of the CD members to conclude the convention as swiftly as possible. Given the consensus of all regional groups to ensure consistency during the final stages of the negotiations my delegation is ready to support Peru's idea of keeping the same bureau under Ambassador Batsanov's chairmanship.

Mongolia has consistently advocated the achievement of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing, considering that this would constitute a reliable guarantee to halt the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. My Government welcomes the decision of France to join the NPT and hopes that similar action by other nuclear and militarily important States will make a valuable contribution to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and indeed international security as a whole. It is our firm belief that the end of the cold war and the emerging new pattern of international relations based on confidence and cooperation make the old arguments for the continuation of nuclear tests obsolete and unconvincing. We fully agree that a CTB will need a highly effective and reliable verification system and a lot of complex technical work is needed to elaborate such a system. The Conference on Disarmanent and its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban will play an essential and indispensable role in this endeavour.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mongolia for her statement and also for her kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador García Moritán.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Recently I have had occasion to hold consultations with you in your capacity as representative of the United Kingdom on items of special common interest, Madam President, and I have found in you a disposition which I value highly

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and which in my view reflects diplomatic qualities from which the Conference on Disarmament has benefited greatly during your presidency. You may be assured of the respect of my delegation.

The negotiations on the chemical weapons convention have finally acquired the pace and the prospect of an early conclusion. It is particularly encouraging to see how a flexible and constructive approach has given a fresh impulse to a negotiating process whose lack of progress was at odds with a definitely positive international climate. Hence we welcome the fact that this determination has finally reached our negotiating table. It is unnecessary to reiterate our commitment and our fullest possible political will to finalize the instrument as soon as possible, so that 1992 is definitely the year in which the Conference on Disarmament will be able to submit to the United Nations General Assembly its first multilateral disarmament agreement. Time is short, but if a positive consequence may be drawn from our protracted deliberations for almost a decade, it is that we all know perfectly well which are the concrete areas where we will have to concentrate our greatest efforts in this final phase in order to achieve a balanced and effective text.

My country does not possess and has never possessed or used chemical weapons. Like many others participating in these negotiations, our interest has always been focused on achieving a coherent agreement from the viewpoint of national security, but at the same time above all one that guarantees that enthusiasm in tackling the military aspects of science and the chemical industry will not hamper the unrestricted development of this sector in its real, i.e. civil dimension. That is why, in embarking on this stage of the negotiations we focus special attention, inter alia, on two very specific aspects thereof - firstly, the economic and commercial consequences of the convention, and secondly the characteristics of the verification system which will ultimately be agreed.

In respect of the first question, I think that in this field it should be possible for us as negotiators to find points of convergence. No one, I feel - in particular those among us who will have to justify decisions taken here before our parliaments - favours an agreement that imposes undue controls or restrictions upon the chemical industry. My country, whose chemical industry is a significant contributor to the gross national product, is among those that consider this sector to display one of the highest levels of dynamism and growth potential in the economy. It is logical to conclude that it is in our interests to facilitate the conclusion of an agreement that will not be perceived by our chemical industry as an obstacle to its activities, which, as in most countries active in this area, are already subject to detailed health and environmental regulations. In this context, it seems important to stress that in order to be a balanced and fair instrument, the convention on chemical weapons that we are about to conclude will have to be economically and commercially neutral - in other words its provisions should not result in competitive imbalances or industrial or commercial advantages to the benefit or detriment of any of its States parties. This is something that we will have to bear especially in mind in the context of the institutional machinery to be set up under article VIII of the convention.

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At the same time, we must strive to make sure that once the convention has been concluded, it constitutes the sole operational standard in force regarding controls over exports and transfers of chemicals and equipment related to the chemical industry. Once the treaty enters into force nothing should prevent extensive cooperation and exchange of chemicals for purposes not prohibited by the treaty. Once the convention enters into force, each State party should, in conformity with its provisions, ensure through national legislation the proper fulfilment of the provisions of the treaty to which it has just acceded. The continued existence of additional controls would result in a dual legal regime applicable to chemical activities which would undoubtedly overlap with the convention, thus in our view creating the dangerous situation of parallel legal frameworks, leading to ambiguous situations and penalizing the private sector. The existence of parallel or restricted groups, whose purpose has hitherto been to limit the transfer of certain chemicals in the absence of a binding multilateral rule, would no longer make any sense. Unless, as we pointed out, the same States that drafted the treaty felt so dissatisfied with the result of our efforts that they did not hesitate to send a signal which was both politically transparent and negative from the viewpoint of confidence-building, acknowledging that the convention so painstakingly elaborated is inadequate to eliminate the menace of chemical weapons in a credible manner. The proposed conference at the ministerial level that has been suggested as a political alternative to provide a final political boost to our negotiations might perhaps offer a good occasion for those countries that have so far relied on this type of unilateral measure to announce that, as from the entry into force of the convention, they will recognize the due primacy of this instrument and cease to apply controls of this type to the States parties.

Closely connected with this problem is that of the protection of information of scientific or commercial value. The question has been the subject of consideration in the "rolling text", and will undoubtedly deserve more attention from the technical secretariat, which in discharging its responsibilities will necessarily have access to a wealth of information on production volumes as well as the present planned activities of a good part of the world's chemical industry. I think it is useful for us to bear in mind in thinking about this problem that the future organization to be established will have to devote itself to ensuring the application of the provisions of the convention, facilitating activities relating to verification of compliance and providing a forum for consultation and cooperation among States parties. Verification activities will require great zeal on the part of the technical secretariat, which will be in possession of data which are intrinsically of incontestable scientific and commercial value.

The chapter of this convention on verification will, as we all know, have two main components. The first, in accordance with the provisions of article IX, will, through challenge inspections, deal with individual situations that may be considered potentially harmful for the convention as they point to possible violations of the provisions of the very heart of the agreement - relating to the possible production of chemical weapons in open breach of the spirit and the letter of the agreement. Consequently, in our view, our efforts should be aimed at creating a system as complete and

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reassuring as possible. My delegation will revert to the important problem of inspections on request in the near future, however, today we should like to share with the delegations some ideas on verification of activities not prohibited by the convention, under article VI of the instrument. This component of verification refers to activities not prohibited by the convention, and for that very reason it is different in implications and scope from those related to inspections on request. Here, verification measures are designed to preserve the instrument through systematic periodic monitoring of certain facilities which are regarded as being of importance and are engaged in perfectly legitimate activities. It will come as no surprise that for a country like mine, which does not possess and has never possessed chemical weapons, this is the area of verification that attracts the greatest attention, since this is the machinery which will apply to a sizeable extent to civil industry.

From the resumption of our negotiations at the beginning of this year, the debate took on a new dimension in the wake of the introduction of concepts such as the "integrated approach" proposed by the delegation of Sweden. We understand that this turn in the debate, regardless of the final shape of the verification system, is a positive factor in itself, in so far as it can be said to have alerted us all to the direction our deliberations were taking. It became increasingly evident that the verification arrangements as they appeared in the "rolling text", in addition to being tremendously costly, would not necessarily be appropriate for the objective they were supposed to pursue. A simple statistical survey of facilities throughout the world which would be subject to inspections revealed the practical limitations of the system. From the moment when we negotiators accepted this premise and took on the task of refocusing our efforts on the search for a more appropriate and manageable system, we have seen with some disappointment that, as if obeying the logic of an irresistible attraction, the discussions appear to be giving way once again to the reiteration of ideas, that take us back to schemes for the delimitation of "capable" chemical industry of such theoretical breadth that we might well wonder what the point of the simplification exercise is if ultimately - this time with different arguments - we will arrive at verification schemes which are unnecessarily ambitious.

In the view of my delegation, a possible means of proceeding could be based on the integrated approach, duly moderated and modified through the inclusion of other definition criteria, for example, the selection of major chemical industry categories, in order to avoid from the outset the possibility of affecting the normal operation of industries and sectors that are unlikely to embark on the production or processing of certain chemicals included, for instance, in schedule 2. In this respect, it might be necessary to work towards a definition of industrial categories on the basis of specific criteria and not necessarily using existing rules which, while they may serve as a useful basis for the final definition, have been conceived on purely commercial grounds and thus do not necessarily reflect the political perspective relating to security that might be developed here. The delimitation can also benefit from the definition of certain chemical processes, as proposed in the integrated approach, although here we should perhaps move forward on greater precision and greater detail so as to avoid,

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here too, an excessively broad framework which would once again produce arrangements that were unworkable in practice. The general criterion, which in our view should offer basic orientation, provides that verification of such a huge and complex sector as the chemical industry should be kept within reasonable limits - all the more so if we recognize that even a system providing for thousands of inspections per year would not be sufficient to guarantee that the convention was not being breached in one way or another in a dozen small facilities located in different points of the globe.

Let me refer to an issue that has a close relationship with the preceding reflections on verification under article VI, and one which in my delegation's view deserves particular attention. One of the effects of the new debate on the type of verification applicable to the chemical industry has been to focus our efforts on the work being done under the guidance of France as a Friend of the Chair for technical matters to delimit what is normally called "capable" chemical industry. My delegation would like us in this important exercise to try to stop referring to "capable" chemical industry - for a number of reasons. An inexperienced observer following our negotiations, on observing our attempts to define "capable" chemical industry, might well wonder what capability we are speaking of. For those of us who are participating in this exercise, the specialists and those who, overcoming boredom, are following our efforts, there is no doubt that we are referring to chemical industry which has the capability to produce chemicals that because of their toxicity and incapacitating nature are deemed subject to inclusion in schedules 1 and 2, but which are not at present engaged in producing, consuming or processing them. No one can ignore the fact that the idea, the concept of capabilities or capability in the context of security and disarmament matters has had a very clear meaning, as it brings to mind precisely the capability for aggressive applications, often on the margins of, or behind the back of, the international community. I think that in a field like that of the chemical industry, where what we are trying to do in seeking an integrated approach is to delimit facilities which are important in terms of the application of this convention, but nevertheless do not constitute a danger for its purposes and objectives, we should avoid a semantic formula that conveys an idea contrary to the objectives underlying it.

Just over a year ago, when the international climate allowed us to turn down the volume of our polemic on inspections under article IX, it was considered appropriate to stop referring to challenge inspections. The concepts of inspection on demand or on request modified the terminology in view of the fact that the very point at stake was the correct designation of what will be one of the key provisions of the convention. In this connection we believe a fortiori that when speaking of the civil chemical industry it would be advisable to drop the term "capable" and replace it by a more appropriate expression. I am convinced that behind the appearance of a semantic question in this matter lies an entire attitude and a disposition, an animus, in the Latin tradition, which should be guided by an attitude of respect and self-restraint vis-à-vis the world's chemical industry, without whose cooperation the best machinery we could devise will be a dead letter.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

It has been said that the illusion of security is worse than the absence of security. A verification system more concerned about monitoring civil activities than about setting up a solid and comprehensive system of challenge inspections may in our view lead to an unhappy combination of high costs and an illusion of security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for his kind words. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not.

I would like now to turn to document CD/WP.407, containing a draft decision on the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, and to take it up for action. If there is no objection I shall take it that the Conference is ready to adopt the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. CALDERON (Peru) (translated from Spanish): First of all, Madam President, I should like to convey to you my delegation's great pleasure at the way in which you have conducted our work in these past four weeks. The results we have obtained are proof of your outstanding abilities and we are very gratified at that.

As regards document CD/WP.407, I should simply like to point out that the expression "antes de 1992 [before 1992]" in the eighth line of the Spanish translation should be replaced by "en 1992 [by 1992]".

The PRESIDENT: The secretariat will put that right.

May I now turn to two organizational matters? The first deals with the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons. The Chairman of the Committee has expressed the wish, which I understand is shared by some other delegations, to hold a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee before the end of the second part of the annual session. After a careful review of the situation, which shows a very busy week facing us before we suspend the work of the plenary on 27 June, the only available date is tomorrow, Friday 21 June, in the afternoon. Accordingly, the Ad Hoc Committee will meet at 3 p.m. tomorrow.

The second question refers to our activities during the coming days. The secretariat has circulated today the usual timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and by its subsidiary bodies. As you will see, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons will hold a series of meetings with representatives from industry. The timetable is merely indicative and may be changed, if necessary. On this understanding, I suggest that the Conference adopt it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: As announced at the opening of this plenary meeting, the Conference will hold an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 3 which will take place in approximately 10 minutes after the end of this plenary meeting, and we will have the participation of the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States to the nuclear and space talks.

I should like now to make my closing statement at the end of the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britian and Northern Ireland.

Four weeks have passed and my tenure as President of this Conference is virtually at an end. I said four weeks ago that, thanks to the efficiency of my predecessors, the structure of the Conference work was already well in place. In other words the Conference was on auto-control and all this pilot would need to do was a slight adjustment here and there. It has indeed proved to be the case.

During the last four weeks this Conference has been honoured by visits of a number of eminent government ministers and officials. On 6 June the Conference heard statements by the Hon. Douglas Hogg QC MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, by State Secretary Helga Hernes of Norway and by Dr. Taro Nakayama, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan; and on 13 June by the Hon. Douglas Graham, Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand. These visits have been a reminder of the high expectations our Governments have of the work of the Conference.

Another indication of the importance attached to this Conference by the international community is the fact that two further States, Angola and Ireland, have applied and been accepted as non-member States participating in the work of the Conference. I am sure they will make a most useful contribution to our deliberations.

As part of the negotiations for a chemical weapons convention, three decisions have been taken by the Conference. A letter to non-member States not participating in the Conference was approved for transmission by myself as President and Ambassador Batsanov as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. That letter is being transmitted today. The Conference endorsed a recommendation by the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons that inter-sessional work should continue from 8 to 19 July, and we have just agreed important additions to the Ad Hoc Committee's mandate.

I confess I had hoped that decisions would be reached under my presidency on the timetable for additional inter-sessional work during the rest of the year. It has as you know, proved possible to reach an informal understanding (not yet discussed and endorsed formally by the Conference) on inter-sessional work from 30 September to 11 October and 18 November to 20 December as well as from 6 to 18 January. Unfortunately it has not yet been possible to reach agreement concerning the three weeks during the biological weapons Convention review conference and the five weeks during the United Nations General Assembly First Committee. This is a matter which will have to be returned to later. There are a number of considerations which have to be taken into account, and it is certainly not for the President to take sides in

(The President)

the debate. But I would like to make one point. We have just about reached halfway in the time so far made available for chemical weapons negotiations during 1991. Think how much has been achieved during the first half, and then compare it with how much still remains to be settled before we can achieve our common goal of an early convention. It is a sobering thought. We surely should not dismiss lightly the possibility of according yet more of the available time to our chemical weapons negotiations.

I have no progress to report on my consultations on proposals for expanding the membership of the Conference. I understand that Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico has nothing new to report on his consultations on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan held a further open-ended consultation on improved and effective functioning on 18 June. A welcome development in the conduct of our business is, as I announced a little while ago, participation in the informal plenary this morning of the USSR and United States of America representatives to the nuclear and space talks to brief us on developments in their negotiations.

In this my final plenary as President, I should like to thank you all for your kindness and support. A special thanks to the members of my bureau. My gratitude goes to the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference and to their excellent secretariat. They ease the task of a President enormously.

I know my successor, Ambassador Ledogar of the United States, will enjoy the same support. His excellent qualities need no introduction from me. I wish him luck.

That concludes my statement. I have no other business for this plenary meeting and I shall now proceed to adjourn it. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 25 June, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.